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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 001989

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR DS, EB/TRA/OTP - RADETSKY/WALKLET AND EUR/SE  
ROME FOR FAA AND CUSTOMS/ICE  
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DHS FOR TSA, ICE AND FAMS - RICHARD STEIN

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PTER](#) [FAIR](#) [BEXP](#) [TU](#)  
SUBJECT: Update on Civair Safety Security; Civair  
Officials to Visit Washington

Ref: Ankara 1700

Sensitive But Unclassified. Please Handle Accordingly.

1. (U) This is an action cable. Please see para 7.

2. (SBU) Summary: Acting DCM pressed the Acting Transport Ministry Undersecretary for GOT action on air safety and security deficiencies in an April 1 meeting. The Undersecretary told us that the GOT was working on remedies for these problems, but concrete results may be months away. He also informed us that a GOT delegation plans to visit Washington April 20 to discuss a possible acquisition of baggage screening equipment with the Transportation Security Administration. End Summary.

3. (U) On April 1, Acting DCM, Econoff and Economic Specialist called on Acting Transport Ministry Undersecretary Mehmet Kutlu to press for GOT action on air safety and security deficiencies. Kutlu, who was accompanied by Director General of Civil Aviation Topa Toker, and Mustafa Karabay of the DGCA Security Division, informed us that a GOT delegation planned to visit Washington April 20 on a possible acquisition of baggage screening equipment.

4. (SBU) A/DCM raised a draft law to improve DGCA air safety oversight capacity as well as the GOT's plans to remedy border/customs control deficiencies at Turkish airports (reftel). Kutlu told us that the air safety amendments had been cleared by GOT ministries and the bill is now at the Prime Ministry. He added that the GOT would send a copy of the bill to ICAO for review and comment. The bill will not be submitted to Parliament until separate draft legislation on public administration reform is passed.

5. (SBU) GOT officials reaffirmed plans to require international passengers to clear customs and border control at the initial point of entry to Turkey, but renovations to enable passengers to claim and recheck their luggage at the international terminal at Istanbul Ataturk Airport must be completed first. This might not occur before the end of 2004, though authorities are trying to accelerate the process. Toker noted that, in the interim, other measures, such as checking boarding passes and taking headcounts after passengers deplane are meant to ensure that no one is allowed to avoid immigration checks. A/DCM thanked Toker and his colleagues for their work on this issue, but urged them to close this loophole in entry procedures as quickly as possible.

6. (U) Kutlu and Toker told us they planned to travel to Washington for meetings on April 20 to consult with the U.S. Transportation Security Administration on a possible purchase of explosive detection equipment. The delegation, which will include officials from the state airport authority (Turkish acronym DHMI), would be interested in meeting with counterparts at the FAA and the Federal Air Marshall Service on air safety and air marshal issues as well. The delegation will consist of:

-- Mehmet KUTLU, Undersecretary of Ministry of Transportation  
-- Topa Bilgetin TOKER, Director General of Turkish

Civil Aviation Authority  
-- Mahmut TEKIN, Director General of DHMI (Turkish Civil  
Airport Authority)  
-- Ahmet ERGIN, Electronic Department Manager of DHMI  
-- Turgay SAHAN. Chair of EADUK (Comittee for Training  
Research and Inspection of Turkish Civil Aviation)  
-- Oguz URKER, Electronic Department Deputy Manager of  
DHMI  
-- Hakan Fehmi GORK, Mechanical Engineer from DHMY

Recommendation/Action Request

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17. (SBU) Embassy continues to be concerned about the gap  
in Turkey's border control system and urges Washington  
agencies to raise this issue in writing (reftel) as well  
as during Transport/DGCA/DHMI's visit to Washington. In  
addition, we see this visit as an excellent opportunity  
to:

--raise concerns about air safety in relation to the FAA  
IASA program;  
--respond to the GOT's request for information on our  
air marshal program;  
--and promote U.S. exports.

We strongly recommend that TSA, FAA, FAMS and perhaps  
Commerce or EB officials meet with Kutlu and Toker later  
this month.  
Edelman